

JENISON HISTORY

August 2011

Issue No.: 2011-6

www.jenisonhistory.org

JENISON HISTORICAL
ASSOCIATION
PO Box 664
Jenison, Michigan 49429
TELEPHONE
(616) 457-4398

From the Archives

These articles are a regular feature primarily from the files of Virginia Timmer. If you have a topic you would like to contribute (your family stories, etc.) please contact the editor

Our mission is to learn about Jenison history, obtain artifacts relating to its history, and maintain the Jenison Historical Museum as a place to share and display our heritage.

STORY OF THE HUSBAND-HANCHETT-TIFFANY HOUSE

Editors Note: Over time we have published stories that included bits and pieces of this information. This entire story was written by Virginia originally in July 1975 and she revised it in July 1997 and again in May 2001. This is Part 2 of a 3 part series.

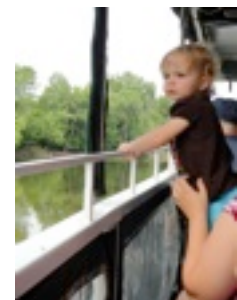
ABOUT THE HOUSE

Levi Husband died in 1889, the same year that Hiram Jenison, elder brother of Lucius and Luman, died. Levi was employed by the Jenisons as bookkeeper for the Jenison enterprises. After his death, his duties were taken over by his wife, Margaret, who was also named as the Jenison Post-mistress in 1904. Daughter, Bessie, helped in the office after graduating from Grandville High School. After her marriage in 1896 to Benjamin Hanchett, Jr., they made their home in East Grand Rapids on Fisk Lake in a house they called "Lakewood," now known as the "Bissell House."

continued, page 2



The Grand Lady...
Enjoyed by young and old and many of us in between!



Highlights from the
Grand Lady
Riverboat Tour on
July 16, 2011



HUSBAND-HANCHETT-TIFFANY HOUSE (CONT)

continued from page 1

Ben Hanchett was a Jenison descendant, his mother being Betsey Jenison, the youngest child in Lemuel and Sarah Jenison's family. Later, around 1920, they made their home at 125 College Avenue, Grand Rapids next door to the well-known Voigt House. Two children were born to the Hanchetts: Gerald Jenison who was born in 1899 and passed away January 15, 1971. Elizabeth Jeanette was born in 1901 and died April 18, 1983. Although Elizabeth was married twice, her death marked the end of that Hanchett-Jenison line as neither Gerald or Elizabeth had children.

After Margaret Husband's death in 1913, Bessie Husband Hanchett became sole owner of the house and other Jenison properties, some of which were mentioned before. Her husband, Benjamin S. Hanchett, passed away in 1933, leaving Bessie with the responsibilities of their various business holdings. Ben Hanchett had promoted and built the Grand Rapids, Holland and Chicago Interurban Line which was the first double track. It ran from Grand Rapids through Jenison and on to Jenison Park in Holland. From Holland, riders could board a ship to Chicago. He was President of the Grand Rapids Street Railway Company and helped develop Ramona

Park, was Director of Old Kent Bank, a Regent of the University of Michigan for 22 years and President of the Village of East Grand Rapids. He was a direct descendant of the Jenison family.

Elsie Morrison Martin (Mrs. Robert), sister of Margaret Morrison Husband (Mrs. Levi), became a widow in 1899 and came to live with Margaret and also helped in the L & L Jenison Company office located in the Jenison Store. After Margaret's death, Elsie Martin continued working for the Jenison business 30 years and lived in the house until her death in 1945 at the age of 85. Bessie Hanchett stayed at the house occasionally when duty called. In 1928, the Hanchetts had hired John J. Piers, father of Virginia Piers Timmer, as bookkeeper and manager of their extensive holdings. Mr. Piers remained in the employ of Bessie Hanchett until her death on November 14, 1960 at the age of 91.

After 1945, the house was rented because housing was scarce due to the return of servicemen after World War II. Plans to turn the house into a rest home never materialized. Mr. and Mrs. Clarence (Zoe) Tiffany moved into the house in 1951 as renters. They purchased the house and contents in 1961 after Bessie Hanchett's death. They also

purchased the L & L Jenison Mill, built in 1864 and turned it into the Jenison Mill Antique Shop which ran for seven years. The mill was torn down in 1963 and a Union Bank built on the site which has now been taken over by Curious World at the northeast corner of Chicago Drive and relocated Main Street.

The Tiffanys had spent much time and money restoring the house, even while renting. Then they learned, in 1965, that the house and six others in the same block were in the path of the Chicago Drive-I-196 interchange and doomed to the wrecking ball. Mr. Tiffany passed away suddenly in 1968.

Some of the restoration included landscaping. Lush green grass replaced a well worn and neglected lawn. Evergreen and other shrubs were planted along with strawberry plants and raspberry bushes. A variety of fruits, vegetables, spring, summer and fall flowers were planted on the acreage. The entire site was enclosed with cyclone fencing. A wood fence was erected along the driveway on the north side from boards out of the razed Jenison Mill. They painted the house, had the stone foundation sandblasted, painted, put on a new roof, bought aluminum storms and screens for the entire house, had the house insulated

HUSBAND-HANCHETT-TIFFANY HOUSE (CONT)

(side walls and attic floor), had all new eaves put on the house and installed a new gas furnace with new runs. The original registers were left in place. The curved windows in the turret were repaired and an entirely new septic system was constructed. The original characteristics of the house were preserved. After purchase of the house by the State Highway Department, Mrs. Tiffany, on July 4, 1969, relocated to a house in Grand Rapids and was forced to sell most of the original furnishings and historical material stored in the attic which they had purchased along with the house.

The Tiffanys donated pictures and other items of local interest to the Union Bank who desired to preserve the history of the site. These items along with a doll house replica of the L & L Jenison Mill made by Ysbrandt Groendyke, were displayed there. When the Union Bank left Jenison, all of these items were turned over to the Jenison Museum. Mrs. Tiffany passed away June 26, 1978 at the age of 90.

MORE PHOTO HIGHLIGHTS OF THE RIVERBOAT TOUR



August:

We won't be open on the 3rd Saturday, August in the House can be so hot. See you on the 1st Tuesday in September or the September Open House

September:

We are working on a special guest speaker for the Association Meeting on September 15th at the Georgetown Library

The ever popular 'Jenison - Then and Now' will be making a comeback in September with an updated and expanded display. Be sure to come out and see what is new in this popular display

October:

Be sure to catch Ken Williams display on the Interurban.

Check out the calendar:

for other upcoming events such as the always popular 'Jenison - Then and Now' coming in September.

We look forward to seeing you, and if you would like to volunteer to help at any of these events, please contact the museum at 457-4398 or email us at info@jenisonhistory.org.

Thank You:

JHA would like to extend a big thank you to the Four Seasons Garden Club for the beautiful gardens at the Museum.

If you are not a dues paying member, please consider joining to help support the Association. Dues are a bargain at only \$10 per year. Contact the JHA at info@jenisonhistory.org or calling the museum 616-457-4398

Volunteer Opportunities!!

Museum Cleaning: This is a big job, as you can well imagine, that needs constant attention in order to have the museum look it's best during the open houses. Contact any board member if you can lend a few hours.

Tour Guides: The school tours are a great way of teaching the children about our history and is such a rewarding experience. You won't regret being a part of this experience for our local children. Joyce

Klawiter would love to hear from you.

Community Displays: An initiative is to get some displays out into the community, possible to local banks, schools and businesses. What better way to get awareness out into the community than to bring the museum to them. Grayce Lancaster is heading up this project. She would welcome any help you might be able to offer from finding the locations

to picking display material and setting up the displays.

And the list goes on... Monthly Open Houses, Theme's for Open Houses, Inventory, Museum Maintenance, board trustee.

You can come to a monthly meeting or reach out to any board member if you would like to volunteer in any particular area.

SEPTEMBER OPEN HOUSE

JENISON THEN AND NOW

You won't want to miss this ever popular display of pictures showing Jenison landmarks as they were 'Then' and what they look like 'Now'

SATURDAY, September 17, 2011
2-4 PM

FOR SALE AT THE MUSEUM

Jenison Museum Note Pads	\$ 1.50
Stationary with Envelopes	\$ 2.00
Book: Bend in the River	\$15.00
Book: At the Bend	\$ 3.00
Mill Print (unframed)	\$10.00
Jenison at the Bend CD	\$10.00
Historical Prints:	
Large	\$10.00
Small	\$ 7.50

Available during any open house, or call the Museum at
457-4398

JHA TRUSTEE'S

Chair

Liz Timmer (13)

Vice Chair/Co-Historian

Ken Williams (11)

Treasurer/Editor

Ruth Lowing (11)

Social Secretary

Nellie DeLaat (13)

Recording Secretary

Bev Potter (13)

Tours/Co-Archivist

Joyce Klawiter (12)

Co-Archivist

Barb Semeyn (11)

Displays/Curator

Grayce Lancaster (12)

Maintenance/Co-Historian

Mike Timmer (13)

Trustee

Anne Foote (11)

Township Rep

Del South

((#)) = year of re-election to the board

Contact Information: To reach any board member, leave a message at 457-4398.

**Historical Association of
Michigan**

Find us on the registry of the Historical Society of Michigan
www.hsmichigan.org



Jenison Historical Association
PO Box 664
Jenison, MI 49429

2011 Meeting Schedule

Thursday August 18 - Georgetown Library
Thursday, September 15 - Georgetown Library
Thursday, October 20 - Georgetown Library
Thursday, November 17 - Georgetown Library

No Meeting in December, 2011

All meetings begin at 6:45 PM unless noted

2011 Museum Open House Schedule

September 17 2-4 PM Jenison Then and Now
October 15 2-4 PM Interurban
December 3 1-4 PM Holiday Open House

1st Tuesday of the month April thru November
10 AM - Noon

Themes posted on web site: www.jenisonhistory.org
Call to volunteer your time at the open houses